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The Deity alone is and permeates all things. All visible and invisible things are an emanation from Deity, and are not absolutely distinct from it.

—*Sufi Saying*

THEOSOPHY

VOLUME 64 DECEMBER, 1975 NUMBER 2

THEOSOPHICAL COMMUNICATION

EARLY in 1875, H. P. Blavatsky wrote in a letter to an American scholar who lived in Ithaca: "I am here in this country sent by my Lodge on behalf of Truth in modern spiritualism, and it is my most sacred duty to unveil what is, and expose what is not." A few years later it became plain that what H.P.B. came to do was to "unveil" the ancient teaching of the Wisdom Religion. She began by using Kabalistic, Platonic, and Eastern sources to show what truth lay behind nineteenth-century Spiritualism—which she called "an earlier revival of crude Theosophy"—and by the time of her death in 1891 she had placed of record in *The Secret Doctrine* "all" of the ancient teaching "that can be given out to the world in this [the nineteenth] century."

Much of her energy was exercised in debate with the conventional authorities of the time. In this activity there were two general tasks. One was to show from available evidence the mistakes and misconceptions of both religious claims and scientific theory. The other was to render into a language comprehensible to Western man the leading ideas of the occult philosophy, and at the same time to justify the interpretations of old scriptures and philosophical writings which she provided. A key statement of explanation was included in her article, "The Negators of Science," which was published in *Lucifer* in April, 1891. It concerns the form in which the Wisdom Religion has been recorded, throughout centuries and millennia:

> The Hierophants and Initiates of the Mysteries in the Secret Schools in which all the Sciences inaccessible and useless to the masses of the profane were taught, had one universal, Esoteric tongue—the language of symbolism and allegory. This language has suffered neither modification nor amplification from those remote times down to this day. It still exists and is still taught. There are those who have preserved the knowledge of it, and also of the arcane meaning of the Mysteries; and it is from these Masters that the writer of the present protest had the good fortune of learning, howbeit imperfectly, the said language. Hence her claim to a more correct comprehension of the arcane portion of the ancient texts written by avowed Initiates—such as were Plato and Iamblichus, Pythagoras, and even Plutarch—than can be claimed by, or expected from, those who, knowing nothing whatever of that "language" and even denying its existence altogether, yet set forth authoritative and conclusive views on everything Plato and Pythagoras knew or did not know, believed in or disbelieved.

The problem, for H.P.B., was to penetrate this cloud of ignorance, and to do it in a way that would nonetheless speak to the hidden longings to know the truth in even the ignorant. For this she had to go at least "half way" to the modern mind. She wrote, therefore, as Mr. Judge remarked, in the language of science, since science was "the thought-form of the age," and at the same time turned the force of what she had to say against the assumptions of materialism. That she obtained a hearing at all can only be due to the immense egoic strength and perceptive power which appear in her writing, and must have had equal or greater presence in individual encounters.

Even apart from the prejudice of the modern world there were difficulties. In a comment on the apparent obscurity of Krishna's teaching in the second chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita,* Mr. Judge remarks: "It is difficult for a great Being such as Krishna to convey to the inquiring mind these high themes, and so, perforce, language must be used that forever has two meanings—it continually retreats before us, going from one to the other." There is a sense in which H.P.B. was obliged to use language to explain the limitations of language, even while using it to communicate the seeds of philosophic discovery to her readers. Her audience was intellectually bound by a scientific, religious, and philosophic vocabulary that was far too simplified, when not tied to error, to encompass the order of experience to which the nineteenth-century cycle of psychism—the Spiritualistic phenomena—had ex-

posed the Western world. To warn the public against mediumship and the abuses of Spiritualism, H.P.B. had to enlarge the vocabulary of modern thought—by means of the categories of Eastern metaphysics. This was a vast undertaking, amounting to fundamental re-education of the human race!

Inevitably, while H.P.B. was surely cognizant of the difficulties of communication in such a project, her audience could not possibly be aware of the limitations under which they considered the propositions of the occult philosophy and interpreted its teachings. Much more space, perhaps, in *The Secret Doctrine* than the reader is commonly aware of is given over to explaining the intellectual barriers which must be overcome. Early in the first volume (p. 43) she said:

> Our ideas, in short, on duration and time are all derived from our sensations according to the laws of Association. Inextricably bound up with the relativity of human knowledge, they nevertheless can have no existence except in the experience of the individual ego, and perish when its evolutionary march dispels the Maya of phenomenal existence. What is Time, for instance, but the panoramic succession of our states of consciousness? In the words of a Master, "I feel irritated at having to use these three clumsy words—Past, Present, and Future—miserable concepts of the objective phases of the subjective whole, they are about as ill-adapted for the purpose as an axe for fine carving." One has to acquire *Paramartha* lest one should become too easy a prey to *Samvriti*—is a philosophical axiom. In clearer words: "One has to acquire true Self-consciousness in order to understand *Samvriti,* or the 'origin of delusion'." *Paramartha* is the synonym of the Sanskrit term *Svasam-vedana,* or "the reflection which analyses itself."

(Further discussion of the relativities of human perception under the sway of the senses will be found on pages 329 of Vol. I and 636 of Vol. II.)

"Why is it," one of the Theosophical Teachers was once asked, "with your great knowledge and power that you do not make men think as they should?" He replied: "The human soul is not so constituted. It has to see and act for itself." A full understanding of why this should be so, we may think, would indeed constitute "true Self-consciousness."

Another view of the task of both Theosophical learning and education is given by Mr. Judge in "The Synthesis of Occult Science," in which he says:

> Man is a perfected animal, but before he could have reached perfection even on the animal plane, there must have dawned upon him the light of a higher plane. Only the perfected animal can cross the threshold of the next higher, or the human plane, and as he does so there shines upon him the ray from the supra-human plane. Therefore, as the dawn of humanity illumines the animal plane, and as a guiding star lures the Monad to higher consciousness, so the dawn of divinity illumines the human plane, luring the monad to the supra-human plane of consciousness. This is neither more nor less than the philosophical and metaphysical aspect of the law of evolution. . . . There is a gradual unfolding of its potentialities from "Monera" to man, and there are two whole planes of consciousness, the sixth and seventh "senses," not yet unfolded to the average humanity.

Then, speaking of the teaching recorded in *The Secret Doctrine* and other Theosophical works of adept-origin, Mr. Judge remarks:

> That the authors of ancient wisdom have spoken from at least two whole planes of conscious experience beyond that of our every-day "sense-perception" is to us inconceivable, and yet such is the fact; and why should the modern advocate of evolution be shocked and staggered by such a disclosure? It but justifies his hypothesis and extends its theatre.

An instructive example of the obstacles to understanding which are characteristic of the modern mind is found in a discussion of the teaching of Devachan printed by H.P.B. in the *Theosophist* for August, 1883. A British student had complained of the explanation of this state given in "Fragments of Occult Truth," saying that it implied that souls in Devachan, because of the illusion experienced, are "cheated by nature." This contention, argued at some length, was given three replies, which came, H.P.B. says in an editor's note, from "three different sources." All three replies are extremely illuminating. Here we quote from passages which deal specifically with the difficulties of language and cultural or educational background experienced by Western inquirers. The first Reply begins by saying:

> The "misunderstanding" arises from a natural misconception of the sense in which certain terms are made use of rather than from any "inconsistent language" used. The alternative of moving forever in a vicious circle faces the European student of Occult philosophy, who begins his study before having made himself familiar with the technical mode of thought and peculiarity of expression of its teachers. His first necessity is,

to know the esoteric views of the ultimate nature of Spirit, of Matter, Force and Space; the fundamental and axiomatic theories as to the Reality and Unreality, Form and the Formless (*rupa* and *a-rupa*), dream and waking. Especially should he master—at least approximately—the distinction between the "objective" and the "subjective" in the living man's sensuous perceptions and the same as they appear to the psychic perceptions of a disembodied entity (Devachanee). . . . When the word "subjective" is used in connection with the state of isolation of the Devachanee, it does not stand for the ultimate possible concept of subjectivity, but only for that degree of the same thinkable by the Western *non-Oriental* mind. To the latter everything is subjective without distinction which evades all sensuous perceptions. But the Occultist postulates an ascending scale of subjectivity which grows continually more real as it gets farther and farther from illusionary earthly objectivity: its ultimate, *Reality*—Parabrahm.

The third Reply begins with what amounts to a general if brief review of the characteristic problems of Western students when confronted by the occult metaphysics:

The foremost question that presents itself to the mind of the Occultist of Asiatic birth, upon seeing the multifarious difficulties which beset the European students of Esotericism, as regards Devachan: how to account for their weird fancies with regard to the after states! It is natural for one to measure other persons' intellectual operations by his own; not without an effort can he put himself in his neighbor's place and try to see things from his stand-point. As regards Devachan, for example, nothing would apparently be clearer than the esoteric doctrine, incompletely as it may have been expressed by "Lay Chela" [writer of "Fragments of Occult Truth"]; yet it is evidently not comprehended, and the fact must be ascribed, I think, rather to the habitual differences in our respective ways of looking at things than to the mechanical defects in the vehicle of expression. It would be very hard for an Asiatic Occultist to even conjure up such a fancy as that of Swedenborg, who makes the angels our *post-mortem* "inquisitors," obliged to estimate a soul's accumulated merits and demerits by physical inspection of its body, beginning at the tips of the fingers and toes and tracing thence to centres! Equally baffling would be the attempt to bring ourselves to the point of seriously tracing a denizen of the American Summer-Land of Spirits through the nurseries, debating clubs, and legislative assemblies of that optimistic Arcadian Eden. A warp of anthropomorphism seems to run through the entire woof of European metaphysics. The heavy hand of a *personal* deity and his personal ministers seems to compress the brain of almost every

Western thinker. If the influence does not show itself in one form, it does in another.

Is it a question about God? A metaphysical slide is inserted, and the stereopticon flashes before us a picture of a gold-paved, pearly-doored New Jerusalem, with its Durbar Hall, peacock throne, Maharajah, Dewans, courtiers, trumpeters, scribes, and general train. Is the intercourse between disembodied spirits under discussion? The Western constitutional bias of mind can conceive of no such intercourse without some degree of mutual consciousness of an objective presence of the corporeal kind: a sort of psychic chit-chat. I hope I do not wrong our Western correspondents, but it is impossible, for myself at least, to draw any other conclusions from the whole tenor of the British Theosophist's memorandum. Vapoury and etherealized as his concept may be, it is yet materialistic at the core. As we would say, the germ-point of metaphysical evolution is of Biblical derivation: and through its opalescent vapour sparkle the turrets of the "New Jerusalem." . . .

It was the ignorant delusion of the geocentric hypothesis which begot all the exoteric theologies, with their absurd dogmas. So, likewise, it is the ignorant theory of monogenesis, or but one life on earth for each being, which makes it so hard for European metaphysicians to read the riddle of our existence and comprehend the difference between the monad's individuality and its physical appearance in a series of earth-lives as so many different, totally distinct personalities. Europe knows much about atomic weights and chemical symbols, but has little idea of Devachan.

The questioner had objected to the Devachanee's remaining in ignorance of the pain of others who remain on earth. The writer of the second Reply made this comment:

If this generous provision of nature that never punishes the innocent outside this our world of delusion, be still called "a cheating of nature," and objected to, on the ground that it is not an "honest symbol" of the other personality's presence, then the most reasonable course would be to leave the occult doctrines and Devachan alone. The noble truths, the grandest goal in soul-life, will remain forever a closed book to such minds. Devachan, instead of appearing what it is—a blissful rest, a heavenly oasis during the laborious journey of the Monad toward a higher evolution, will indeed present itself as the culmination, the very essence of death itself. One has to sense intuitionally its logical necessity; to perceive in it, untaught and unguided, the outcome and perpetuation of that strictest justice absolutely consonant with the harmony of universal law, if one would not lose time over its deep sig-

nificance. We do not mean it in any unkind spirit, yet with such an opposition to the very exposition (since no one is pressed for its acceptance) of our doctrine by some western minds, we feel bound to remind our opponents that they have the freedom of choice. Among the later great world philosophies there are two—the more modern the outgrowth of the older—whose "after states" are clearly and plainly defined, and the acceptance of either of which, moreover, would be welcomed: one—by millions of spiritualists, the other—by the most respectable portion of humanity, viz., civilized Western society. Nothing equivocal, or like cheating of nature in the latter: her Devachanees, the faithful and true, are plainly and charitably promised the ineffable rapture of seeing during an eternity those whom they may have loved best on earth suffering the tortures of the damned in the depths of Gehenna. We are, and do feel willing to give out some of our *facts*. Only occult philosophy and Buddhism having both failed as yet to produce a Tertullian to strike for us the key-note of an orthodox hell, we cannot undertake to furnish fictions to suit every taste and fancy.

To which closing statement H.P.B. appends this note:

Reference is probably made here to the soul-inspiring monologue that is found in Tertullian's *Despectæ*, Chapter XXX. Falling into a wild ecstasy of joy over the bare prospect of seeing some day all the philosophers "who have persecuted the name of Christ burn in a most cruel fire in hell . . . ," this saintly Patristic character, a Father of the Christian Church, exclaims: "Oh what shall be the magnitude of that scene. How I shall laugh! How I shall rejoice! How I shall triumph!" etc. —*Ed.*

The foregoing extracts from the *Theosophist* concerning the Western misconceptions of Devachan are taken, so to speak, from the thick of the effort to "unveil what is and expose what is not." This was in 1883. Only *Isis Unveiled* and articles in the *Theosophist* had thus far appeared; publication of *The Secret Doctrine* was still five years away, and the *Key* would not be issued for six, and in both these books would be amplification of the metaphysical doctrines of the Occult teaching, with emphasis on the need for their comparative mastery by all those who hoped to find their way to Truth. A similar emphasis is found again and again in the writings of Mr. Judge. In his *Notes* on the *Gita* he said:

Although philosophy seems dry to most people, and especially to minds in the Western world who are surrounded by the rush of their new and quite undeveloped civilization, yet it must be taught and understood. . . . Strength without knowl-

> edge, and sympathetic tears without the ability to be calm,—in fine, faith without works—will not save us. And this is one of the lessons of the second chapter.
>
> The greatest of the ancients inculcated by both symbols and books the absolute necessity for the acquirement of philosophical knowledge, inasmuch as strength or special faculties are useless without it. . . . "For strength when destitute of the ruling aid of wisdom, is overcome by stupid astonishment confusing all things together; and for the purpose of action the intellect is useless when it is deprived of strength." So, whether our strength is that of sympathy or of astral vision, we will be confounded if philosophical knowledge be absent.

The goal, in terms of philosophic insight, is to be able to take the position represented by knowledge of the true nature of man, and to think about all other questions and decisions from that point of view. Study of the philosophy, as put into the language of our age by Teachers who understood both the limitations and promise of the modern mind, is an essential in gaining philosophical knowledge. The observation in the Conclusion of the *Key* bears directly on this need:

> You must remember that all our members have been bred and born in some creed or religion, that all are more or less of their generation both physically and mentally, and consequently that their judgment is but too likely to be warped and unconsciously biassed by some or all of these influences. If, then, they cannot be freed from such inherent bias, or at least taught to recognize it instantly and so avoid being led away by it, the result can only be that the Society will drift off on to some sandbank of thought or another, and there remain a stranded carcass to moulder and die.

H.P.B. was directly aware of the dimensions of the task she undertook. In her letter early in 1875, after speaking of her mission, she added that perhaps she had come "one hundred years too soon."

> I am afraid it is so, that in the present state of mental confusion, of doubt, of the endless and fruitless conflicts between the Tyndalls and the Wallaces, the issues of which are arrested by the almighty power of the dollar,—for people seem to care every day less for truth and every hour more for gold,—my feeble protest and endeavors will be of no avail; nevertheless, I am ever ready for the grand battle, and perfectly prepared to bear any consequences that may fall to my lot.

Today, a hundred years later, the wonder and marvel is that she accomplished so much, in view of the obstacles which con-

fronted her. And the lesson of her heroic efforts, and of the means she chose to awaken and instruct the mind of the race, is that she knew what she was doing, and how to do it. It is for this reason that serious students of Theosophy cleave to the writings of H.P.B.—and to those of her faithful colleague, Mr. Judge. There has been virtually no one, before her or since, so well able to teach, who knew so well how to provide the minds of human beings with materials for study that were exactly suited to their needs, from a higher, soul-evolutionary point of view.

On the Science of Internal Nature

We work for true Religion and Science, in the interest of fact as against fiction and prejudice. It is our duty, as it is that of physical Science—professedly its mission—to throw light on facts in Nature hitherto surrounded by the darkness of ignorance. And since ignorance is justly regarded as the chief promoter of superstition, that work is, therefore, a noble and beneficent work. But natural Sciences are only one aspect of SCIENCE and TRUTH. Psychological and moral Sciences, or theosophy, the knowledge of divine truth, wheresoever found, are still more important in human affairs, and real Science should not be limited simply to the physical aspect of life and nature. Science is an abstract of every fact, a comprehension of every truth within the scope of human research and intelligence. "Shakespeare's deep and accurate science in mental philosophy" (Coleridge), has proved more beneficent to the true philosopher in the study of the human heart—therefore, in the promotion of truth—than the more accurate, but certainly less deep, science of any Fellow of the Royal Institution.

—H. P. BLAVATSKY

STUDIES IN ISIS UNVEILED

ADEPTSHIP AND MEDIUMSHIP

MAGIC is spiritual WISDOM; nature, the material ally, pupil and servant of the magician. One common vital principle pervades all things, and this is controllable by the perfected human will. *The trinity of nature is the lock of magic, the trinity of man the key that fits it.*

To comprehend the principles of natural law involved, the reader must keep in mind the fundamental propositions of the Oriental philosophy.

1st. There is no miracle. Everything that happens is the result of law—eternal, immutable, ever active. Apparent miracle is but the operation of forces antagonistic to what Dr. W. B. Carpenter, F.R.S.—a man of great learning but little knowledge—calls "the well-ascertained laws of nature." Like many of his class, Dr. Carpenter ignores the fact that there may be laws once "known," now unknown to science.

2nd. Nature is triune: there is a visible, objective nature; an invisible, indwelling, energizing nature, the exact model of the other, and its vital principle; and, above these two, *spirit,* source of all forces, alone eternal, and indestructible. The lower two constantly change; the higher third does not.

3rd. Man is also triune: he has his objective, physical body; his vitalizing astral body (or soul), the real man; and these two are brooded over and illuminated by the third—the sovereign, the immortal spirit. When the real man succeeds in merging himself with the latter, he becomes an immortal entity.

4th. Magic, as a science, is the knowledge of these principles, and of the way by which the omniscience and omnipotence of the spirit and its control over nature's forces may be acquired by the individual while still in the body. Magic, as an art, is the application of this knowledge in practice.

5th. Arcane knowledge misapplied, is sorcery; beneficently used, true magic or WISDOM.

NOTE.—This article is made up of passages from *Isis Unveiled,* topically arranged. The pages from which the statements are taken are given at the conclusion of the article. This article is part of a series that was first printed in volumes 5 and 6 of THEOSOPHY.

6th. Mediumship is the opposite of adeptship; the medium is the passive instrument of foreign influences, the adept actively controls himself and all inferior potencies.

7th. All things that ever were, that are, or that will be, having their record upon the astral light, or tablet of the unseen universe, the initiated adept, by using the vision of his own spirit, can know all that has been known or can be known.

8th. Races of men differ in spiritual gifts as in color, stature, or any other external quality; among some peoples seership naturally prevails, among others mediumship. Some are addicted to sorcery, and transmit its secret rules of practice from generation to generation, with a range of psychical phenomena, more or less wide, as the result.

9th. One phase of magical skill is the voluntary and conscious withdrawal of the inner man (astral form) from the outer man (physical body). In the cases of some mediums withdrawal occurs, but it is unconscious and involuntary. With the latter the body is more or less cataleptic at such times; but with the adept the absence of the astral form would not be noticed, for the physical senses are alert, and the individual appears only as though in a fit of abstraction—"a brown study," as some call it.

To the movements of the wandering astral form neither time nor space offer obstacles. The thaumaturgist, thoroughly skilled in occult science, can cause himself (that is, his physical body) to *seem* to disappear, or to apparently take on any shape that he may choose. He may make his astral form visible, or he may give it protean appearances. In both cases these results will be achieved by a mesmeric hallucination of the senses of all witnesses, simultaneously brought on. This hallucination is so perfect that the subject of it would stake his life that he saw a reality, when it is but a picture in his own mind, impressed upon his consciousness by the irresistible will of the mesmerizer.

But, while the astral form can go anywhere, penetrate any obstacle, and be seen at any distance from the physical body, the latter is dependent upon ordinary methods of transportation. It may be levitated under prescribed magnetic conditions, but not pass from one locality to another. Hence we discredit all stories of the aerial flight of mediums in body, for such would be miracle, and miracle we repudiate. Inert matter may be, in certain cases and under certain conditions, disintegrated, passed through walls,

and recombined, but living animal organisms cannot.

The adept can stimulate the movements of the natural forces in plants and animals in a preternatural degree. Such experiments are not obstructions of nature, but quickenings; the conditions of intenser vital action are given.

The adept can control the sensations and alter the conditions of the physical and astral bodies of other persons not adepts; he can also govern and employ, as he chooses, the spirits of the elements. He cannot control the immortal spirit of any human being, living or dead, for all such spirits are alike sparks of the Divine Essence, and not subject to any foreign domination.

A familiar example of one phase of the power of the soul or astral body to manifest itself, is the phenomenon of the so-called spirit-hand. In the presence of certain mediums these seemingly detached members will gradually develop from a luminous nebula, pick up a pencil, write messages, and then dissolve before the eyes of the witnesses. Many such cases are recorded by competent and trustworthy persons. These phenomena are real, and require serious consideration.

The fluttering phantom-hand is an emanation from the medium. The "force concerned in the phenomenon" is the will of the medium, exercised unconsciously to the outer man, which for the time is semi-paralyzed and cataleptic; the phantom-hand is an extrusion of the man's inner or astral member.

The same principle involved in the unconscious extrusion of a phantom limb by the cataleptic medium, applies to the projection of his entire "double" or astral body. This may be withdrawn by the will of the medium's own inner self, without his retaining in his physical brain any recollection of such an intent—that is one phase of man's dual capacity. It may also be effected by elementary and elemental spirits, to whom he may stand in the relation of mesmeric subject.

Dr. Fairfield is right in one position taken, viz.: mediums are usually diseased, and in many if not most cases the children or near connections of mediums. But he is wholly wrong in attributing all psychical phenomenon to morbid physiological conditions. The adepts of Eastern magic are uniformly in perfect mental and bodily health, and in fact the voluntary and independent production of phenomena is impossible to any others. We have known many, and never a sick man among them. The adept retains perfect con-

sciousness; shows no change of bodily temperature, or other sign of morbidity; requires no "conditions," but will do his feats anywhere and everywhere; and instead of being passive and in subjection to a foreign influence, rules the forces with iron will. The medium and the adept are as opposed as the poles. The body, soul, and spirit of the adept are all conscious and working in harmony, and the body of the medium is an inert clod, and even his soul may be away in a dream while its habitation is occupied by another.

A medium needs either a foreign intelligence—whether it be spirit or living mesmerizer—to overpower his physical and mental parts, or some factitious means to induce trance. An adept requires but a few minutes of "self-contemplation." The adept has no need of extraneous aids—the simple exertion of his *will*-power is all-sufficient.

The mediums for real manifestations are least able, as a rule, to comprehend or explain them. The medium need not exercise any *will-power*. It suffices that she or he shall know what is expected by the investigators. The medium's "spiritual" entity, when not obsessed by other spirits, will act outside the will or consciousness of the physical being, as surely as it acts when within the body during a fit of somnambulism. Its perceptions, external and internal, will be acuter and far more developed, precisely as they are in the sleep-walker. And this is why "the materialized form sometimes knows more than the medium," for the intellectual perception of the astral entity is proportionately as much higher than the corporeal intelligence of the medium in its normal state, as the spirit entity is finer than itself. Generally the medium will be found cold, the pulse will have visibly changed, and a state of nervous prostration succeeds the phenomena, bunglingly and without discrimination attributed to disembodied spirits; whereas, but one-third of them may be produced by the latter, another third by elementals, and the rest by the astral double of the medium himself.

The mesmerizer wills a thing, and if he is powerful enough, that thing is done. The medium, even if he had an honest purpose to succeed, *may get no manifestations at all; the less he exercises his will, the better the phenomena: the more he feels anxious, the less he is likely to get anything;* to mesmerize requires a positive nature, to be a medium a perfectly passive one. This is the Alpha-

bet of Spiritualism, and no medium is ignorant of it.

It is erroneous to speak of a medium having *powers* developed. A passive medium has no power. He has a certain moral and physical condition which induces emanations, or an aura, in which his controlling intelligences can live, and by which they manifest themselves. He is only the vehicle through which *they* display their power. This aura varies day by day, and, as would appear from Mr. Crookes' experiments, even hour by hour. It is an external effect resulting from interior causes. The medium's moral state determines the kind of spirits that come; and the spirits that come reciprocally influence the medium, intellectually, physically, and morally. The perfection of his mediumship is in ratio to his passivity, and the danger he incurs is in equal degree. When he is fully "developed"—perfectly passive—his own astral spirit may be benumbed, and even crowded out of his body, which is then occupied by an elemental, or, what is worse, by a human fiend of the eighth sphere, who proceeds to use it as his own. But too often the cause of the most celebrated crime is to be sought in such possessions.

The reader may inquire wherein consists the difference between a medium and a magician? The medium is one through whose astral spirit other spirits can manifest, making their presence known by various kinds of phenomena. Whatever these consist in, the medium is only a passive agent in their hands. He can *neither command* their presence, nor *will* their absence; can never compel the performance of any special act, nor direct its nature. The magician, on the contrary, *can summon and dismiss spirits at will;* can perform many feats of occult power through his own spirit; can compel the presence and assistance of spirits of lower grades of being than himself, and effect transformations in the realm of nature upon animate and inanimate bodies.

Physical phenomena are the result of the manipulation of forces through the physical system of the medium, by the unseen intelligences, of whatever class. In a word, physical mediumship depends on a peculiar organization of the *physical* system; spiritual mediumship, which is accompanied by a display of subjective, intellectual phenomena, depends upon a like peculiar organization of the *spiritual* nature of the medium. As the potter from one lump of clay fashions a vessel of dishonor, and from another a vessel of honor, so, among physical mediums, the plastic astral

spirit of one may be prepared for a certain class of objective phenomena, and that of another for a different one. Once so prepared, it appears difficult to alter the phase of mediumship, as when a bar of steel is forged into a certain shape, it cannot be used for any other than its original purpose without difficulty. As a rule, mediums who have been developed for one class of phenomena rarely change to another, but repeat the same performance *ad infinitum*.

The majority of these spirits have naught to do with the phenomena consciously and deliberately produced by the Eastern magicians. The latter leave to sorcerers the help even of elemental spirits and the elementary spooks. The adept has an unlimited power over both, but he rarely uses it. For the production of physical phenomena he summons the nature-spirits as obedient *powers*, not as intelligences.

Were these god-like men "mediums," as the orthodox spiritualists will have it? By no means, if by the term we understand those "sick-sensitives" who are born with a peculiar organization, and who in proportion as their powers are developed become more and more subject to the irresistible influence of miscellaneous spirits, purely human, elementary, or elemental. Unquestionably so, if we consider every individual a medium in whose magnetic atmosphere the denizens of higher invisible spheres can move, and act, and live. In such a sense every person is a medium. Mediumship may be either 1st, self-developed; 2nd, by extraneous influences; or 3rd, may remain latent throughout life. *The reader must bear in mind the definition of the term, for, unless this is clearly understood, confusion will be inevitable.* Mediumship of this kind may be either active or passive, repellent or receptive, positive or negative. Mediumship is measured by the quality of the aura with which the individual is surrounded. This may be dense, cloudy, noisome, mephitic, nauseating to the pure spirit, and attract only those foul beings who delight in it, as the eel does in turbid waters, or, it may be pure, crystalline, limpid, opalescent as the morning dew. All depends upon the moral character of the medium.

About such men as Apollonius, Iamblichus, Plotinus, and Porphyry, there gathered this heavenly nimbus. It was evolved by the power of their own souls in close unison with their spirits; by the superhuman morality and sanctity of their lives, and aided by frequent interior ecstatic contemplation. Such holy men pure

spiritual influences could approach. Radiating around an atmosphere of divine beneficence, they caused evil spirits to flee before them. Not only is it not possible for such to exist in their aura, but they cannot even remain in that of obsessed persons, if the thaumaturgist exercises his will, or even approaches them. This is MEDIATORSHIP, not *mediumship*. Such persons are temples in which dwells the spirit of the living God; but if the temple is defiled by the admission of an evil passion, thought or desire, the mediator falls into the sphere of sorcery. The door is opened; the pure spirits retire and the evil ones rush in. This is still mediatorship, evil as it is; the sorcerer, like the pure magician, forms his own aura and subjects to his will congenial inferior spirits.

But mediumship, as now understood and manifested, is a different thing. Circumstances, independent of his own volition, may, either at birth or subsequently, modify a person's aura, so that strange manifestations, physical or mental, diabolical or angelic, may take place. Such mediumship, as well as the above-mentioned mediatorship, has existed on earth since the first appearance here of living man. The former is the yielding of weak, mortal flesh to the control and suggestions of spirits and intelligences other than one's own immortal demon. It is literally *obsession* and *possession;* and mediums who pride themselves on being the faithful slaves of their "guides," and who repudiate with indignation the idea of "controlling" the manifestations, "could not very well deny the fact without inconsistency." This mediumship, whether beneficent or maleficent, is always *passive*. Happy are the pure in heart, who repel unconsciously, by that very cleanness of their inner nature, the dark spirits of evil. For verily they have no other weapons of defense but that inborn goodness and purity. Mediumism, as practised in our days, is a more undesirable gift than the robe of Nessus.

Physical mediumship depending upon passivity, its antidote suggests itself naturally; *let the medium cease being passive*. Spirits never control persons of positive character who are determined to resist all extraneous influences. The weak and feeble-minded whom they can make their victims they drive into vice. It is notorious that the best physical mediums are either sickly, or, sometimes, what is still worse, inclined to some abnormal vice or other.

"The tree is known by its fruits." Side by side with passive

mediums in the progress of the world's history, appear active mediators. We designate them by this name for lack of a better one. The ancient witches and wizards, and those who had a "familiar spirit," generally made of their gifts a trade. Not so with the mediators, or hierophants. These men were guided merely by their own personal spirit, or divine soul, and availing themselves of the help of spirits but so far as these remain in the right path.

What we have said of mediums and the tendency of their mediumship is not based upon conjecture, but upon actual experience and observation. There is scarcely one phase of mediumship that we have not seen exemplified during the past twenty-five years in various countries. India, Thibet, Borneo, Siam, Egypt, Asia Minor, America (North and South), and other parts of the world, have each displayed to us its peculiar phase of mediumistic phenomena and magical power. Our varied experience has taught us two important truths, viz.: that for the exercise of the latter personal purity and the exercise of a trained and indomitable will-power are indispensable; and that spiritualists can never assure themselves of the genuineness of mediumistic manifestations, unless they occur in the light and under such reasonable test conditions as would make an attempted fraud instantly noticed.

NOTE.—The volume and page references to *Isis Unveiled*, from which the foregoing article is compiled, are in the order of the excerpts, as follows:—ii, 590, 635, 587, 588, 589, 590, 594, 595, 596, 592, 594, 596; i, 109, 490, 367, 457, 486, 487, 488, 490, 488.

THE NATURAL SHARING

There is a whisper out of the ages to him who can understand it,—"Whatever is known to thyself alone, has always very great value." There is some reason to believe that when a man does not write his poetry it escapes by other vents through him, instead of the one vent of writing; clings to his form and manners, whilst poets have often nothing poetical about them except their verses. Jacobi said that "when a man has fully expressed his thought, he has somewhat less possession of it." One would say, the rule is,—What a man is irresistibly urged to say, helps him and us. In explaining his thought to others, he explains it to himself, but when he opens it for show, it corrupts him.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

letters • questions • comment

The Secret Doctrine *speaks of three lines of evolution. What is "spiritual evolution" in terms of our individual lives?*

On page 181 of the first volume there is specific reference to the three lines of evolution—Monadic (or spiritual), intellectual, and physical—which shows them to be both individual and cosmic. These lines are said to be "inextricably interwoven and interblended at every point," in our system, and H.P.B. adds that they are the "finite aspects or the reflections on the field of Cosmic Illusion of ATMA, the seventh, the ONE REALITY."

Whatever may be understood as "spiritual evolution," then, it is not to be considered as separate from intellectual or physical evolution. Further reading in the same passage amplifies this. Monadic evolution is concerned with the growth and development of the Monad "into still higher phases of activity." This growth is in conjunction with intellectual evolution, and physical evolution is said to be—

> represented by the Chhayas of the lunar Pitris, round which Nature has concreted the present physical body. This body serves as the vehicle for the "growth" (to use a misleading word) and the transformations through Manas and—owing to the accumulation of experiences—of the finite into the INFINITE, of the transient into the Eternal and Absolute.

Without the Manasa-Dhyanis who represent the evolutionary power of mind, linking spirit and matter, neither the physical evolutionary power of nature nor the Lunar Monads, the creators of forms from a former evolutionary period, could develop beings capable of carrying on this growth or transformation. This establishes the primary assumption of theosophical philosophy—that any evolution must begin on the plane of cause, which is the realm of the mind. It shows, further, that accompanying diversity there is always an underlying unity. Spiritual evolution, then, involves the perception of this underlying unity, despite the dif-

ferences produced in a cycle of growth, while intellectual evolution relates to *how* these differences serve the fulfillment or "purpose" of manifestation. At this point in our planetary evolution, we are engaged in the collaborative process of these two lines, and in giving the lower forms the impulse needed for their higher development.

Individual, spiritual evolution involves taking the position of the perceiver in experience. This brings into perspective the fact that the character of any experience is always determined by the *meaning* we give to it. Progress is in terms of what we consider to be absolute reality and what the relative realities. There are isolated, functional meanings pertaining to our physical world—to the laws governing there—which may or may not take into account how the working of these laws affects the feeling and capacity for growth of the beings involved.

Any activity, it might be said, contributes ultimately to spiritual evolution in the broadest sense, inasmuch as it is a manifestation of the power to be and to do, and to experience the effects. But the term "spiritual evolution" acquires its essential meaning in relation to man because it points to the capacity in every conscious individual to see, not only in a many-faceted way, but see all things as representative parts of an underlying wholeness. This kind of perception makes for spiritual awareness in the human sense.

Evidences of this inward reality are, moreover, constantly at hand. Most apparent to the rural dweller, perhaps, is the endless continuity sustaining the recurring cycles of birth, growth, death and regeneration in natural forms. The same reality becomes apparent at a different level for the parent who learns how to assist a child's nutrition by understanding the relationships between food and the body's capacities for assimilation. This might be said to have even a "spiritual" aspect, since it represents growing awareness of the modes of organic interdependence. The more fully such harmonies between man and nature, internal and external, are understood and established, the more complete the union in consciousness of the lines of evolution which meet in man.

We might say that there are two ways in which human evolution is carried on. Both require self-induced and self-devised effort. But one is in response to the promptings of external con-

ditions, while the other grows out of the need to understand *how* men function consciously as parts of the whole. The more the desire to know is self-initiated, the greater opportunity for conscious, manasic evolution.

What is the source of the "ought" that seems to be part of every situation? Why is it not enough simply to find out what works well and do it?

The "ought," indeed, seems to be inherent in the way the question is posed, since there is *always* need to make a judgment about what "working well" means. Animals are not troubled by questions of what they "ought" to do; they act according to their instinctual intelligence, which has a limited perfection. Instinct is a sure guide only within the ranges of species-wide experience, and its reliability depends on the fundamental givens of the conditions remaining the same. What may mean the perpetuation of the species in one set of circumstances may lead to extinction if these change drastically. Animals adapt past learnings to new situations, a process continually going on, in which intelligence is functioning to preserve forms. But this intelligence cannot create new forms. This seems the crucial issue. The only being in nature that experiences the "ought" is man. He is one who is awake, and striving to be more so, on the plane not only of physical form but of mind. Through mind his higher principles gain access to the plane of causation. Man has imagination; the plane of mind presents contrasts in terms of cause, of choice. For humans, who are the embodiment of self-conscious mind, the selection of alternatives revealed by this awareness is basically a matter of distinguishing between themselves as separate beings—beings with more extensive powers than the other kingdoms—and as integral expressions of an infinite universe of embodied consciousness.

So man is dual in constitution or nature. He is a "two-sided" ego. Part of him is engaged in evolution simply by acting according to patterns established in the long distant past, but he is also a being to whom the free spaces of the self-conscious mind are open—are, in fact, the radii of his enduring self. Meanwhile, the question of what is right or good to do—what the individual "ought" to do—occurs for deliberation at various levels. There is a "right" and a "wrong" at the physiological level—the matter

of keeping in good health, in order to do what one needs to do with his life without unnecessary interruption. The "ought" here is subservient to larger purposes. And so on, up the scale of human action. "Ought," as everything else in life, is hierarchical.

Therefore, it seems that the ever-present "ought" is the natural concomitant of self-consciousness in every man. From the standpoint of universal principle, it is the guiding light in decisions affecting even the most mundane affairs. It is also the door to the life of the higher mind, to those avenues of thought that nourish the integrity of the soul.

The Matrix of Karma

Every act proceeds from the mind. Beyond the mind there is no action and therefore no Karma. The basis of every act is desire. The plane of desire or egotism is itself action and the matrix of every act. This plane may be considered as non-manifest, yet having a dual manifestation in what we call cause and effect, that is, the act and its consequences. In reality, both the act and its consequences are the effect, the cause being on the plane of desire. Desire is therefore the basis of action in its first manifestation on the physical plane, and desire determines the continuation of the act in its karmic relation to the individual. For a man to be free from the effects of the Karma of any act he must have passed to a state no longer yielding a basis in which that act can inhere. The ripples in the water caused by the action of the stone will extend to the furthest limit of its expanse, but no further; they are bounded by the shore. Their course is ended when there is no longer a basis or suitable medium in which they can inhere; they expend their force and are not. Karma is, therefore, as dependent upon the present personality for its fulfillment, as it was upon the former for the first initial act.

—William Q. Judge

on the lookout

The Highest Explains the Lowest

In the second volume of *The Secret Doctrine,* H.P.B. quotes approvingly from the Russian thinker, N. N. Strachof: *"the true cause of organic life is the tendency of spirit to manifest in substantial forms, to clothe itself in substantial reality. It is the highest form which contains the complete explanation of the lowest, never the reverse."* (II, 654.) Interestingly, in the volume, *Beyond Reductionism,* reporting a conference of scientists held in Europe in the late 1960s, organized by Arthur Koestler, one of the contributors, Paul Weiss, says much the same thing in giving meaning to the expression, *"The whole is more than the sum of its parts."* In his paper, "The Living System," Dr. Weiss points out that the "more" is not quantitative but refers to the behavior of the organism as a whole. The living cell, he says, "certainly does not have more content, mass or volume than is constituted by the aggregate mass of molecules which it comprises." The "more" is in its unified collective behavior, which the observer is able to describe only by recognizing that what can be learned about the parts does not explain the resources of the functioning cell. "In carrying out this upgrading process," Dr. Weiss says, "he is doing no more than *restoring information content* that has been lost on the way down in the progressive analysis of the unitary universe into abstracted elements."

Man Not a Robot

Another of the participants in this conference said its purpose was to bring out into the open "an undercurrent of thought in the minds of perhaps hundreds of biologists" who are resisting the claims of neo-Darwinian orthodoxy. These biologists are opposed to what von Bertalanffy has called "the robotomorphic view of man." They are working, today, to emancipate the life sciences "from the mechanistic conceptions of nineteenth-century physics, and the resulting crudely reductionist philosophy." There seems

here at least veiled recognition that it is "the highest form which contains the complete recognition of the lowest, never the reverse." Commenting on Strachof's statement, H.P.B. remarks that, applied to man, it is an admission of "the identity of the mysterious, integrally acting and organizing Principle with the Self-Conscious and Inner Subject, which we call the Ego and the world at large—the Soul." The present opposition among biologists to "the robotomorphic view" seems a move in this direction. The scientists of the last century, H.P.B. remarked in "Occult or Exact Science?", were "helpless," since their intellectual limitations would not permit them to turn toward the occult view. "Therefore," she said, "it is useless to demand or expect of the learned men of our age that which they are absolutely incapable of doing for us." She then spoke, however, of a coming evolutionary transformation which would improve the texture of their spiritual minds. Conceivably, the present "undercurrent of thought" among biologists is a step in this direction.

"Beef Glut"

A report in *Environment* for March, dealing with food supply in Europe and America, shows how great is the need for total reform in attitudes toward food and the sources of supply in nature. The writer, Bill Drozdiak, relates:

> Spending seemingly more time on the roads than in the fields, European farmers in recent months blocked traffic with their tractors, dumped milk into sewers, and sold fruit and eggs outside supermarkets at prices below production costs. Caught in an income squeeze by rapidly rising costs and falling market prices, the farmers as a group seemed destined to become this year's most serious casualty of inflation, and none were losing more than the cattle breeders.

Apparently encouraged by high meat prices during 1972, beef farmers everywhere increased production, with the result that storage refrigerators were overloaded with unwanted beef. One factor in the excess supply was the adjustment people had made to less expensive foods. Complex economic problems had resulted, which the *Environment* writer describes in detail.

The "Menace" of Surplus

In Europe the cattlemen responded eagerly to the European Economic Community program for greater beef production in

1973, with the result that vast surpluses accumulated just at the time when fertilizer and petroleum costs soared. In consequence, beef farmers slaughtered their cattle en masse and sold their calves, since they saw no hope of future profits. In Europe, the problem was made worse by the fact that "Beef supplies pass through five or more wholesalers and retailers before being made available to the final consumers, with each middleman taking his profit." Looking to the future, Bill Drozdiak says:

> The major concern among agricultural officials remains the menace of a worldwide beef surplus next year and that neither subsidies, premiums, nor intervention price increases may be sufficient to avoid such a situation. Large beef exporters such as Australia, Yugoslavia, and Argentina have also been building up mountains of beef surplus as former export markets have begun to close doors.

No Hunting except from Necessity

The conclusion of Gary Snyder's article in *Living Wilderness* (Winter, 1974-75) makes a striking contrast with the disorders of the meat market in Europe and America:

> Let me describe how a friend of mine from a Rio Grande pueblo hunts. He is twenty-seven years old. The Pueblo Indians, and I think probably most of the other Indians of the Southwest, begin their hunt, first, by purifying themselves. They take emetics, a sweat bath, and perhaps avoid their wife for a few days. They also try not to think certain thoughts. They go out hunting in an attitude of humility. They make sure that they need to hunt, that they are not hunting without necessity. Then they improvise a song while they are in the mountains. They sing aloud or hum to themselves while they are walking along. It is a song to the deer, asking the deer to be willing to die for them. They usually still-hunt, taking a place alongside a trail. The feeling is that you are not hunting the deer, the deer is coming to you; you make yourself available for the deer that will present itself to you, that has given itself to you. Then you shoot it. After you shoot it, you cut the head off and place the head facing east. You sprinkle corn meal in front of the mouth of the deer, and you pray to the deer, asking it to forgive you for having killed it, to understand that we all need to eat, and please make a good report to the other deer spirits that he has been treated well. One finds this way of handling things and animals in all primitive cultures.

Changing Attitudes

There may seem little likelihood of Western man adopting this

"primitive" way; yet, in the perspective of millennia, the spirit of the Indians may be far less primitive than the economic policies of nations which are notoriously indifferent to very nearly all forms of life, including that of humans. Meanwhile, there are strong incentives for another attitude toward what we eat and how it is produced in the work of such writers as Frances Lappé and others who are absorbing the ecological point of view and rethinking man's relations with the earth. The growing popularity of magazines like *Environment, Living Wilderness, Prevention,* and *Mother Earth News* is a sign of changing attitudes which may, as the present cycle matures, establish various "councils of elders" such as Gary Snyder speaks of, to transmit a much improved "lore of the tribe."

T.S. Issues "Epitome"

It is pleasant to be able to report that the Theosophical Publishing House in Adyar, India, which serves the Theosophical Society, has issued a pamphlet reprinting Mr. Judge's *An Epitome of Theosophy,* together with his article, "Theosophy Generally Stated." The text of *Epitome* was taken from a Theosophy Company (India) pamphlet, issued in 1952, and the TPH publication reprints also the useful "Historical Note" which appears in both the American and Indian Theosophy Company editions of the pamphlet, giving background on the original publication of this work and quoting Mr. Judge's emphasis on the importance of straight philosophy. The foreword to the present TPH edition includes the following:

> Mr. Judge was among the original founders of the Society, at its establishment in New York City on November 17, 1875, and was closely associated with Madame H. P. Blavatsky and Col. H. S. Olcott. The first of Madame Blavatsky's Five Messages to American Theosophists in Convention Assembled (1888-91) was addressed to Mr. Judge and contained in the first paragraph the words: " . . . I must first present my hearty congratulations and most cordial good wishes to the assembled Delegates and good Fellows of our Society, and to yourself—the heart and soul of that Body in America." His excellent exposition of the Theosophical teaching in the booklet now reprinted has been found very valuable through the years and we are glad to aid in giving it wide distribution.

The foreword notes that this publication appears during the Centenary Year of the founding of the Theosophical Society.

Death No Agony

A report from Philadelphia printed in the *Seattle Times* for March 31 describes the researches of Elisabeth Kuebler-Ross, a doctor who has studied the cases of hundreds of patients who have apparently died and then recovered. In every instance the patient declared that death was a pleasant experience, and not one of them, Dr. Ross said, "was afraid to die again." Many, she added, "were very angry at the rescue teams that brought them back to life." This account of the experience of dying recalls a passage in Dr. Lewis Thomas' *The Lives of a Cell*. Reviewing the literature on the subject, he says:

> We may be about to discover that dying is not such a bad thing to do after all. Sir William Osler took this view: he disapproved of people who spoke of the agony of death, maintaining that there was no such thing.
>
> In a nineteenth-century memoir on an expedition in Africa, there is a story by David Livingston about his own experience of near-death. He was caught by a lion, crushed across the chest in the animal's great jaws, and saved in the instant by a lucky shot from a friend. Later, he remembered the episode in clear detail. He was so amazed by the extraordinary sense of peace, calm, and total painlessness associated with being killed that he constructed a theory that all creatures are provided with a protective physiologic mechanism, switched on at the verge of death, carrying them through in a haze of tranquility.

Detachment and Calm

The new methods of dealing with cardiac arrest are providing evidence which confirms this view:

> We will be having new opportunities to learn more about the physiology of death at first hand, from the increasing number of cardiac patients who have been through the whole process and then back again. Judging from what has been found out thus far, from the first generation of people resuscitated from cardiac standstill (already termed the Lazarus syndrome), Osler seems to have been right. Those who remember parts or all of their episodes do not recall any fear, or anguish. Several people who remained conscious throughout, while appearing to have been quite dead, could only describe a remarkable sensation of detachment.

Dr. Thomas tells about a study of the reaction to dying in patients suffering from an obstructive disease of the lungs. The ordeal of death in such cases, he said, "was considerably more shattering

for the professional observers than for the observed." Indeed—

> Most of the patients appeared to be preparing themselves with equanimity for death, as though intuitively familiar with the business. One elderly woman reported that the only painful and distressing part of the process was in being interrupted: on several occasions she was provided with conventional therapeutic measures to maintain oxygenation or restore fluids and electrolytes, and each time she found the experience of coming back harrowing: she deeply resented the interference with her dying.

Temporary Separation?

It is of some interest that, according to Dr. Ross, some of the patients who very nearly died "perceived an immediate separation of a spirit-like self-entity from their bodies." This spirit, the report relates, "then became aware of its former body lying in bed." This is reminiscent of various reports of recovered patients who felt that they had seen their body being prepared for surgery, as though they were outside of it, looking down on the prone figure under anæsthetic. In some cases, Dr. Ross says, being unable to communicate with the attending physician or members of their family, "they sometimes see figures like Moses or Jesus greeting them." Is this, one wonders, a foretaste of the devachanic dream, or some psychic reconstruction on the part of the patient, projecting religious tradition? No mention is made of the common experience, so often reported by those coming close to death by asphyxiation or drowning, of the rapid review of the whole life lived, down to even minute incidents.

Forced Revival

With these reports may be contrasted the findings of two Milwaukee physicians of more than forty years ago (see THEOSOPHY 35:135), who described a number of cases in which they were able to restore the heart to beating by electrical and other stimuli. (*Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1933.) But in none of these more than a hundred cases was there any memory of what had occurred in the interval when they were "dead"—while their hearts did not beat. Apparently, this forced sort of resuscitation had an effect different from that reported by both Dr. Ross and Dr. Thomas. Some of the factors bearing on such matters may be studied in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 483-84), where H.P.B. discusses the circumstances under which the astral body may be forced back into the physical, and vitality awakened in the latter.

James Stephens

A fragmentary account of the connection of James Stephens with the Theosophical Movement is provided in Vivian Mercier's review of the *Letters of James Stephens*, edited by Richard Finneran (*Nation*, April 12). Of unknown parentage, Stephens was born in 1882 or before. In 1908 he attracted the attention of A.E. (George Russell), who spoke of him as a young poet "who has a real original note in him." Stephens is best known for his prose fantasy, *A Crock of Gold*, which appeared in 1912. He was a friend of the distinguished Irish writers of his time, and was especially admired by James Joyce. He died in 1950. Mr. Mercier speaks of Stephens' reticence about "intimate matters," remarking:

> . . . for instance, it would be hard to obtain from these letters any clear sense of his religious beliefs, though he does state baldly on page 210, "I believe in reincarnation." He seems to have shared the theosophical beliefs of his good friend "A.E." and certainly read the Upanishads and the Vedas throughout his life.

Insistently Irish

Stephens' books show a curious blend of this influence with an earthy Irish folk quality, humor and gentle drollery seeming to be more important to him than anything else, although the reader may sense, beneath the surface, a shy seriousness. There is this passage in *The Demi-Gods* (1914):

> "He was a magician, and he was one of the most powerful magicians that ever lived. He was a being of the fifth round, and he had discovered many secrets."
>
> "I have known magicians," commented Finaun, "and I always found that they were fools."
>
> "Brien O'Brien destroyed himself," Art continued, "he forfeited his evolution and added treble to his karmic burden because he had not got a sense of humour."
>
> "No magician has a sense of humour," remarked Finaun, "he could not be a magician if he had—Humour is the health of the mind."
>
> "That," Art broke in, "is one of the things he said to me. So you see he had discovered something. He was very near to being a wise man. He was certainly a courageous man, or, perhaps, foolhardy; but he was as serious as a fog, and he could not bring himself to believe it."

Glitter of Profundity

Evidently, Stephens had similar difficulties. His need to remain quaintly Irish turned high metaphysical conceptions into foils for his humor. Always, it seems, this tendency triumphs, making what begin as deep utterances into something playful. Perhaps he did not quite dare to remain serious, as in the following:

> Sometimes they discussed the problems of man in a thousand superficial relationships. The angels were wise, but in the vocabulary which they had to use wisdom had no terms. Their wisdom referred only to ultimates, and was the unhandiest of tools when dug into some immediate, curious problem. Before wisdom can be audible a new language must be invented, and they also had to unshape their definitions and retranslate these secular findings into terms wherein they could see the subject broadly, and they found that what they gained in breadth they lost in outline, and that the last generalisation, however logically it was framed, was seldom more than an intensely interesting lie when it was dissected again. No truth in regard to space and time can retain virtue for longer than the beating of an artery; it too has its succession, its sidereal tide, and while you look upon it, round and hardy as a pebble, behold, it is split and fissured and transformed.

There is undeniable insight here, concerning the fallibilities of relative truth. If Stephens had been able to avoid sounding so oracular, his humor, which is delightful, might be less metaphysically jarring and in better taste. Doubtless poets, like the rest of us, have their weaknesses, and Irish poets, being so wonderfully talented, may have special burdens to bear.

A "Recycle Society"?

In his recent address as president-elect of the American Chemical Society, Glenn T. Seaborg suggested that the country might be able to avoid a succession of repeated energy crises in the future by creating "a recycle society in which virtually all materials are reused indefinitely." This observation, coming from a former head of the Atomic Energy Commission, is good evidence that the trend toward a more natural economic life for the people, already pioneered by numerous enlightened individuals, may be on the way to official recognition. According to a *Los Angeles Times* (April 7) summary:

> In a recycle society, Seaborg said, the present materials situation is literally reversed; all waste and scrap—what are now called "secondary materials"—become our major resources,

and our natural, untapped resources become backup supplies.

Economy in Recycling

Readers of the *Saturday Review* and *Environment* will be well aware that this proposal already has many adherents, and that, here and there, municipalities and governments are taking heed of the warnings of ecologists and undertaking various sorts of recycling programs. Finally, it is becoming apparent that the modern world can no longer afford the wasteful policies taken for granted, until now, by advanced industrial societies. More than one ecologist has pointed out that the familiar idea of "waste" as material without further use has no actual parallel in nature. Mr. Seaborg points out the advantages of recycling:

> Recycling requires less energy than making steel made from iron ore. About 70% less energy is used in recycling paper than in using virgin pulp, and 12 times as much energy is needed to produce primary aluminum as to recover aluminum scrap.

An Apt Warning

However, in connection with Mr. Seaborg's proposals, which are obviously related to heavy industry, it would be well to remember the desirability of thinking about these matters on a smaller, more human scale. When big industry attempts reform, there is a natural tendency for it to be undertaken in terms of manipulative "environmental engineering." This, as Murray Bookchin pointed out in *Liberation* for February, could easily make "the organic approach dissolve into systems analysis." Speaking of federal research devoted to solar energy, Bookchin remarks that the projects involved "would occupy vast areas of desert land" and are "classically traditional in terms of their gigantism and in the extent to which they would exacerbate an already diseased, bureaucratically centralized, national division of labor—one which renders the American continent dependent upon and vulnerable to a few specialized areas of production." This is a warning that needs attention, although it seems inevitable that any return to many small-scale ventures to take the place of present-day mammoth enterprises will occupy considerable time and involve many psychological adjustments to a vastly different way of life.

National Trend

Meanwhile, there are also many signs of change and adjustment at an individual level. According to two *Los Angeles Times* re-

ports, within a single week, on both American coasts and in the central area there were completed numerous dwellings and public buildings designed with solar heating. In Maryland, an all-electric housing community is contemplating the advantages of replacing its system with a solar heating plant.

A bright aspect of Mr. Seaborg's analysis and recommendations is in his advocacy of replacing the "planned obsolescence" of industry with the manufacture of durable, easily repairable, standardized parts. Since the many synthetic products to which we have become accustomed owe their existence to petroleum or its derivatives—a source which, as E. F. Schumacher has pointed out, is virtually unrenewable—Mr. Seaborg's timely recommendations seem hardly debatable. Perhaps what has always been law in the natural world is due to be rediscovered as necessity among men.

A World Made by Conviction

An interesting series of reflections on the operation of Karma —although the word is not used—occurs in a recently published book, *Safe Passage on City Streets* (Abingdon Press) by Dorothy T. Samuel, a television commentator and journalist of Baltimore, Md. In one of her chapters this writer suggests that a measure of immunity to the violence of the day seems to come from an attitude of mind. The young, especially, she says, by their fearlessness and lack of expectation of being attacked, are seldom the victims of street crime. This observation is followed by a simple but convincing psychological analysis:

> Despite the smaller number of young people attacked, however, we do find many stories of young people turning off an attacker's plans. They simply do not play his game. . . . Or they respond out of their own sense of the rightness of things as did one young bank trainee. When the classic holdup man pushed the classic holdup note into her teller's cage, she did not respond to the gun cradled under a sheltering arm. He could not invade the righteousness of her own world, a world in which she lived with the absorption of the very young.

A Choice of Worlds

> "You can't do that," she burst out, "it's against the law."
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> The naiveté is breathtaking. But it took the crook's breath away too, and he ran from the bank, absolutely defeated by her inviolable innocence. What power could he bring against a girl who simply did not understand the world of theft and threat? He could hardly stand there and argue with her. He

did not really want to shoot her in the middle of a bank with counter glass between him and the money anyway.

Of course, one cannot plan such moves ahead. No person who had thought out exactly what she would say to a bank robber could possibly burst forth with a statement like that. But one can plan and program her or his consciousness; one can choose the mental and emotional world in which he will live. When emergencies erupt, one answers out of that mental and emotional world.

Self-Evolved Protection

No great power of imagination is required to expand this illustration to include the world of the adepts, and to conceive of the principle of mental and moral power which makes possible environmental protection such as the Guardian Wall.

Miss Samuel has another story to tell:

In another city, a young woman showed a very similar confidence in her own sense of the rightness of things. She had no bank room around her, no co-workers or patrons to dash to her aid. But she inhabited much the same inner world as the bank teller.

Coming home alone on a tree-shaded street, she was stopped by a youth brandishing a knife carefully blackened against stray beams of light. Yet when he grabbed her and demanded her purse, she was affronted in her sense of the rightness of things.

"You can't bother me! This is my neighborhood!"

It sounded like a response out of "Laugh In" rather than reality. The young woman herself was aghast later when she told the story. But it worked. She was living in a world the attacker could not enter, and with nothing in the outer world to stop him from physical force, he turned and fled.

Acting from principle is a fine philosophy for great minds to examine. But action from any core of inner self, any bastion of selfhood, is a protection with which few mixed-up, petty crooks can cope.

One can generally agree with this writer. Yet it seems a pity that the modern conception of "acting from principle" here makes it a second-rate or imitative stance, in comparison with spontaneous response from the core of the inner self. Surely such cores of selfhood are developed and grow strong by deliberate action from principle. Then, even when this egoic past of principled behavior is forgotten, the strength is there when it is needed.